

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding Office action mailed December 5, 2003.

I. Present Status of Patent Application

Claims 2-10, 13-17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 27-30, 32-34 and 37-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Wang *et al.* (US Patent No. 6,636,505). Claims 11-12 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wang *et al.* in view of Waters *et al.* (US Patent No. 5,832,069). Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wang *et al.* in view of Dziedzic (US Patent No. 6,166,895). Claim 24 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wang *et al.* in view of Yokell *et al.* (US Patent No. 6,507,870). Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wang *et al.*, Water *et al.*, Dziedzic and Yokell *et al.* as applied to claim 2-24 above. Claim 31 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wang *et al.* in view of Lemieux (US Patent 6,452,942) and further in view of Dziedzic. Claim 35-36 and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wang *et al.* in view of Waters *et al.* Claim 43 and 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wang *et al.* in view of Yokell *et al.* Claim 45 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wang *et al.*, Water *et al.*, Lemieux, Dziedzic and Yokell *et al.* as applied to claim 27-44 above.

II. Miscellaneous Issues

In response to the Office Action of December 5, 2003, Applicants have submitted an Affidavit pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.131 declaring that Applicants achieved an actual reduction to practice prior to the effective filing date of the Wang reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,636,505). As each of the claims have been rejected in view of Wang, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are allowable as a matter of law.

Additionally and notwithstanding the foregoing reasons for allowability of claims 2-61, claims 2-61 recite features and/or combinations of features, as are apparent by examination of the

claims themselves, that are patently distinct from the prior art of record. Hence, there are other reasons why claims 2-45 are allowable.

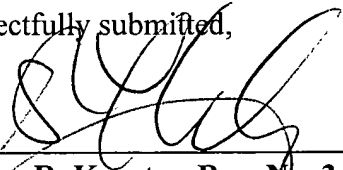
III. Prior References Made of Record

The prior references made of record have been considered, but are not believed to affect the patentability of the presently pending claims. Other statements not explicitly addressed herein are not admitted.

CONCLUSION

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that all objections and/or rejections have been traversed, rendered moot, and/or accommodated, and that the now pending claims 2-45 are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned agent at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,



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